have incidentally gone raving mad, but believe that the hour for "Young England" is very nearly ripe/ Hitchin returns him with a majority of 17,000, but Parliament brings disillusionment, a feeling that 'the world appears to be shaking off the yoke of Democracy,' and that the 'hour is so ripe everywhere for a man, and a drive, and a policy. I hope the great National Government is the last of the *ancien regime.*[9] After re-reading *The Constant Nymph,* he reaches the conclusion that 'it is one of the best novels of this century, if not of always'; he loves *Cavalcade*| and, though he has doubts about Noel Coward, after seeing one of his revues, he is inclined to agree with his sister when she says, 'But he is on your side/ 'His stuff is all right. He's good/ he writes of him to a friend.

This ardent life, cut short before its prime, and so full of zest ("What fun it all is … what with St. Moritz and Socialism and the Surrey hills and Empire-building and the Manor House and Bendigo and Sporting'), was felt to embody the very spirit of Youth. "Who but the very young could adore Ramsay Mac-Donald, find Noel Coward good and an ally for righteousness, and pronounce *The Constant Nymph* a masterpiece ? The elderly were happy to be reminded that youthful hearts were still capable of such careless rapture, and the young to know that their hour was Very nearly ripe'. Socialism and St. Moritz might seem antipathetic, but here was one who found both fun. Not all were viscounts, went to Eton, served on the Board of the Army and Navy Stores; but others, at a less illustrious level, could follow Antony's course, be brave and eager, and await 'a

man and a drive and a policy'. If he was an *edition de luxe,* there were also popular editions, at seven-and-six and two shillings and even sixpence.

How is it possible to pierce below the imagined man to the reality ? How disentangle what is really hoped from stimulated hopes, authentic feelings from those awakened by printed words, coloured pictures, screen shadows speaking and moving, the vast persuasion ceaselessly playing on each human heart? Many faces spread out in an audience, drifting along a street, littering